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APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

MEDIA PLATFORM

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1 **TECHNICAL FIELD**

2 This invention relates to a system and method that enables multiple media
3 providers to integrate their services into a single media platform.

4

5 **BACKGROUND**

6 Media content, like songs and movies, can be provided to media users
7 through compact discs (CDs), digital video discs (DVDs), radio, television,
8 satellite, and the Internet, to name a few. Media users have increasingly used the
9 Internet to access media content, in part because of the physical limitations of
10 buying media on CDs and DVDs, and the generally lower quality and range of
11 choice with broadcast sources.

12 To meet this need for Internet-accessible media content, many media
13 providers have created media access and use applications (hereinafter “provider
14 players”). Some media providers have built provider players that allows users to
15 access their media content online and use their accessed media then or later.

16 With a typical provider player a user can access media content from the
17 media provider associated with that provider player. Such access includes
18 searching through various media content available from the media provider, for
19 instance.

20 The typical provider player also allows users to use the media, either while
21 still online or later. This use can include downloading songs, movies, and other
22 media onto computer memory (or a portable device), burning the media onto a
23 CD, or playing the media file.

24 Media providers desire to retain control on the media downloaded from
25 their service, however. To do so, media from some media providers can only be

1 used on that media provider's player. Because of this, a media provider can
2 control how its media content is used by building these controls into its provider
3 player.

4 There are various significant problems with provider players, however.
5 These applications are expensive. A media provider building a provider player
6 typically incurs significant expenses in building, testing, and marketing the
7 application.

8 Another major problem is that users often do not want to learn how to use a
9 new provider player. If a user knows how to use a provider player of media
10 provider "Acme", for instance, the user is much less likely to learn how to use
11 another, new provider player of a new media provider. Having to learn how to use
12 a new provider player just to gain access to and/or use a new media provider's
13 media content is often too high a bar to cross. Because of this, fewer new
14 customers may be willing to subscribe to a new media provider because they have
15 to learn how to use its provider player.

16

17 SUMMARY

18 The following description and figures describe a system and method for
19 integrating multiple media providers with a single media player. This system and
20 method enables a user to use one media player to access multiple media providers,
21 save media files from these multiple media providers, and use the media files. In
22 addition, the system and method allows multiple media providers to control how
23 their media files are used in the media player.

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1 **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

2 Fig. 1 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
3 media player presenting multiple media providers to which a user can subscribe.

4 Fig. 2 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
5 media player showing various options and including an exemplary user interface
6 of a media provider.

7 Fig. 3 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
8 media player including an exemplary user interface of a media provider, the
9 provider user interface including a webpage showing media files and a selection to
10 download one of those media files.

11 Fig. 4 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
12 media player presenting a media library of media files.

13 Fig. 5 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
14 media player including a selection to record a media file.

15 Fig. 6 illustrates a computer system for a media platform, a communication
16 network, and three remote media providers.

17 Fig. 7 illustrates a media platform and three remote media providers in
18 potential communication with the media platform.

19 Fig. 8 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for integrating multiple
20 media providers with a media player and into a media platform.

21 Fig. 9 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
22 media player including a selection to choose to subscribe or be connected to a
23 media provider.

24 Fig. 10 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for selection and
25 performance of operations chosen of a remote media provider.

1 Fig. 11 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for downloading a media
2 file from a remote media provider.

3 Fig. 12 illustrates a screen shot showing an exemplary user interface for a
4 media player including an exemplary user interface of a media provider, the
5 provider user interface being integrated into the exemplary user interface for the
6 media player and showing a status of a media file's download.

7 Fig. 13 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for performing a
8 requested operation for a media file if the operation is allowed by a media provider
9 to which the media file is attributable.

10 Fig. 14 is a flow diagram of an exemplary method for allowing or
11 disallowing a use of a media file under certain conditions.

12 Fig. 15 is a block diagram of a computer system that is capable
13 implementing a media platform.

14 The same numbers are used throughout the disclosure and figures to
15 reference like components and features.

16

17 **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

18 The following disclosure describes a media platform and related method
19 that enable each of multiple media providers to tailor a media player to allow
20 access, enable use, and control use of its media.

21 The media platform allows users to use one platform to sign up with,
22 access, and use media content from multiple media providers. By starting with a
23 user interface to which a user is already comfortable, the platform enables users to
24 sign up with multiple media providers with less effort. The media platform also
25 enables media providers to set a user's rights to media received from each media

1 provider. In allowing media providers to set how their media is used, the platform
2 enables media providers to control their media without having to build their own
3 media player.

4 Media providers benefit from the media platform in many ways. First,
5 media providers save money and time to market by not needing to build their own
6 players. Second, media providers can more easily gain new customers by making
7 it easier for a new user find and subscribe to their service. Each media provider
8 can enable a new user to sign up with their service using a sign-up user interface
9 that they provide but that resides within the user interface of the media platform's
10 media player. This enables each media provider to control the signing-up process
11 to their own specification. Third, once the new user is signed up, the media
12 provider becomes an option within the media player's user interface, thereby
13 making it easy for the new user to connect to the media provider, including to
14 access media content. Media providers benefit in these ways, while being able to
15 maintain control of their media content.

16 User also benefit from the media platform. Users do not need to learn to
17 use many different media players. Instead, they can access, use, manage, and play
18 media from multiple media sources with just one media platform and just one
19 overarching user interface.

20 Fig. 1 sets forth a screen shot 100 showing an example of the media
21 player's user interface 102 that is displaying three exemplary, fictitious media
22 providers (Acme, MovieMaster, and SongMax) with which a user may sign up to
23 access and use each media provider's media content.

24
25

1 Once a user has signed up with a media provider, the user can then access
2 that media provider's media content with a user interface integrated within the
3 platform's user interface 102.

4 Fig. 2 sets forth a screen shot 200 showing an example of the player user
5 interface 102 and a media provider's user interface 202 integrated into the player
6 user interface 102. (Elements marked with the numerals 204 to 218 will be
7 discussed below, including in the description of Fig. 7).

8 Through the media provider's user interface 202, the user can perform
9 many different actions, like search through the media provider's offered media
10 content, research metadata about particular media, view the user's account, see
11 special services, and the like.

12 Fig. 3 sets forth a screen shot 300 showing another example of the player
13 user interface 102 and another example of the provider's user interface 202
14 integrated into the player user interface 102. (Elements marked with the numerals
15 302 to 308 will be discussed below, including in the description of Fig. 10).

16 In this example, the provider's user interface 202 shows a search of various
17 media content by the user. The user is searching through songs by the artist "U2".
18 From a generated list of songs, the user is choosing to download a song entitled
19 "Elevation" from an album entitled, in part, "All That You Can't L...".

20 Once the media file is downloaded, metadata regarding the media is stored
21 in the media platform's library. At some future time (or immediately after
22 downloading the media), the user can use the media platform to perform an
23 operation, such as play or burn the downloaded media file (here the U2 song,
24 "Elevation").

1 Fig. 4 sets forth a screen shot 400 showing another example of the player
2 user interface 102, the player user interface 102 displaying media files that are
3 included in the media library.

4 Once the user has selected a media file (such as a media file of a song
5 entitled “Without Me” by the artist “Eminem”), the user can request that the media
6 platform perform an operation with the selected media file. Operations for media
7 files can include playing them, downloading them to a portable device, or burning
8 them, such as onto a CD or DVD.

9 Fig. 5 sets forth a screen shot 500 showing another example of the player
10 user interface 102, the player user interface 102 displaying an attempt by the user
11 to burn the media file onto a CD.

12 When the user requests that the media platform burn the song onto a CD,
13 various actions are performed by the media platform. These actions will be
14 discussed in greater detail below, and can include checking whether or not the user
15 has the right to burn that media file onto a CD. If the media platform determines
16 that the user has been given a right by the appropriate media provider to burn the
17 song onto a CD, the media platform will perform the burn operation (not shown).

18 The prior exemplary screen shots and accompanying discussion are
19 intended make the reader familiar with possible uses of the media platform and are
20 not intended to limit the breadth or scope of the media platform and its related
21 methods. The media platform will be discussed in greater detail below.
22 Exemplary methods and systems usable to implement the platform will also be
23 discussed below.

1 Exemplary System

2 *Overview*

3 Fig. 6 shows an exemplary system 600 usable to create a media platform
4 and facilitate related methods. The system 600 includes a display 602 having a
5 screen 604, an input device 606, and a computer 608. The input device 606 can
6 include any device allowing a computer to receive input from a user. The user can
7 send input via the input device 606 to the computer 608 to access and control
8 media, for instance. The user can use the display 602 and its screen 604 to view
9 user interfaces and playback of visual media. The user can use speakers and the
10 like to enjoy playback of audio media as well (not shown).

11 The computer 608 includes a processing unit 610 to execute applications
12 and a memory 612 containing various applications. The memory 612 includes
13 volatile and non-volatile memory, and a media platform 614 described in Fig. 7.

14 The computer 608 communicates with various media content sources
15 across a communication network 616. The communication network 616 can be a
16 global internet, a local intranet, and the like. The communication network 616 can
17 communicate with the computer 608 in various ways, such as across standard
18 land-line wires, fiber optic wires, or wirelessly.

19 Through use of the communication network 616, the computer 608
20 communicates with media content providers, such as a first media provider 618, a
21 second media provider 620, and a third media provider 622. User interfaces and
22 functionality (discussed in greater detail below) from these media providers can be
23 integrated into the media platform 614 to allow a user to access and use media
24 from multiple media providers.

1 *The Media Platform*

2 Fig. 7 shows the media platform 614 included within the memory 612 of
3 Fig. 6, communication between the media platform 614 and the media providers
4 (shown as solid lines), and a boundary between them (shown as a dashed line).
5 The boundary represents the fact that the media providers and the media platform
6 614 communicate across the communication network 616.

7 Most relevant components of the media platform 614 include a media
8 player 702, a registry 704, a service record 706, and a provider/platform integrator
9 708.

10 The media player 702 is configured to perform various operations
11 associated with a media file. These operations include downloading and playing a
12 media file. Playing a media file can be performed by the media player 702 as part
13 of streaming (data streamed from a remote source) or from permanent or
14 temporary memory. Downloading includes recording a media file onto various
15 permanent or temporary mediums. The permanent mediums can include those in a
16 portable device (like a mini-hard-drive in a portable media player), a CD, a DVD,
17 magnetic tape, a hard-drive in a computer, and other optical, electronic,
18 mechanical, or magnetic devices. The temporary mediums can include random
19 access memory and other temporary memory types, such as those that require
20 some sort of power to maintain the media file.

21 The media player 702 can also perform various services when playing a
22 media file, like stopping; fast-forwarding; reversing; advancing or reversing to
23 another track on a multi-track media file; changing a volume at which a media file
24 is presented (muting, un-muting, or adjusting the volume); altering a size, location,
25 or look of visual aspects of the media file; and searching and presenting metadata

1 associated with the media file. This metadata can include the name of the media
2 file, the artist, trivia about the media file, where and on what permanent or
3 temporary medium it is stored (if at all), and the like.

4 The media platform 614 also includes the registry 704. The registry 704
5 includes a list of media providers from which the media platform 614 can receive
6 and follow instructions. The list of media providers in the registry 704 can be
7 altered, however, as particular media providers become suitable or unsuitable for
8 integration into the media platform 614. Instructions received by a media provider
9 that is in the registry 704 are used by the media platform 614 to customize itself to
10 conform to that particular media provider. These instructions will be discussed in
11 greater detail below.

12 The media platform 614 also includes the service record 706. This service
13 record 706 includes information stored by the media platform 614 that the media
14 platform 614 may later communicate to a media provider. The service record 706
15 can include a number of times an operation (like playing or downloading) has
16 been perform by the media player 702 for a particular media file or media files
17 attributable to a media provider. Some media providers wish to keep track of how
18 often their media files have been played or downloaded. Media providers may
19 desire to gain this information to better understand a user's preferences or manage
20 the user's account, such as when the user is charged based on a number of times a
21 media file is played.

22 The media platform 614 also includes the provider/platform integrator 708
23 (hereinafter the "integrator 708"). The integrator 708 uses instructions 710 to
24 integrate functional aspects requested or provided by one or more media providers
25 into the media platform 614. If the instructions 710 are not from a media provider

1 on the registry 704, however, the integrator 708 can refuse to receive or follow the
2 instructions 710.

3 The instructions 710 include or are used by the media platform 614 to build
4 a play module 712, a record module 714, a background module 716, a download
5 module 718, and a display module 720. These modules are called by the media
6 player 702 at various times to aid the media player 702 in determining whether to
7 perform various operations or to integrate information into a player user interface
8 102 or a provider user interface 202. The media player 702 can call each of these
9 modules at particular instances (discussed below) using APIs (“Application
10 Program Interfaces”).

11 There can be multiple modules of each type. If a user has subscribed to the
12 first media provider 618, the second media provider 620, and the third media
13 provider 622, for instance, the media platform 614 can include three play modules
14 712 (one for each media provider). These multiple modules are not shown in Fig.
15 7. In Fig. 7, each module shown (such as the play module 712) represents a
16 module for each media provider to which a user has subscribed. To which media
17 provider a particular module is attributable is distinguishable by the context in
18 which it is discussed herein.

19 In one implementation, the media player 702 calls the play module 712, the
20 record module 714, and the download module 718 whenever a user requests that
21 the media player 702 play, record, or download a media file, respectively. As
22 discussed further below, the media player 702 calls the module associated with the
23 media provider to which the media file is attributable.

24 The play module 712 is a module of computer code that the media player
25 702 calls to determine whether or not to play a particular media file. Each play

1 module 712 is associated with a particular media provider, such as the first media
2 provider 618. Each play module 712 is associated with a particular media
3 provider so that the media player 702 can determine whether or not media files
4 from that particular media provider should be played or not. Thus, the media
5 platform 614 may include multiple play modules, one for each media provider.

6 Similarly, the record module 714 is a module of computer code that the
7 media player 702 calls to determine whether or not to record a particular media
8 file, such as to burn a media file onto a CD or DVD. The media platform 614, for
9 reasons similar to those given above for the play module 712, may include
10 multiple record modules, each record module associated with a particular media
11 provider.

12 The background module 716 is a module of computer code that the media
13 player 702 calls to perform certain actions that do not need to be immediately
14 performed in order to allow a current operation to be approved. These operations
15 are useful to the applicable media provider because they keep track of what the
16 media player 702 has done. It keeps track of the media files associated with the
17 media provider, a number of times each media file has been played, downloaded,
18 and recorded, musical preferences of the user (based on what the user searches
19 and/or play, records, or downloads), and other operations or services performed by
20 the media player 702 or through the media platform 614. As part of keeping track
21 of a user's operations and services, the background module 716 can save and
22 update information in the service record 706. Parts of the service record 706
23 applicable to a particular media provider can be communicated to that media
24 provider. This communication of services and operations allows each media
25

1 provider to be deeply integrated into the media platform 614 and its media player
2 702, which each media provider can use to update accounts and better serve users.

3 Similarly to the play module 712 and the record module 714, the download
4 module 718 is a module of computer code that the media player 702 calls to
5 determine whether or not to download a media file, such as onto a portable media
6 player. The media platform 614, for reasons similar to those given above for the
7 play module 712 and the record module 714, may include multiple download
8 modules, each download module associated with a particular media provider.

9 The display module 720 is a module of computer code that the media
10 player 702 or media platform 614 calls to integrate display preferences of a media
11 provider into the media player user interface 102. This display module 720 can
12 include how a web page attributable to the media provider is oriented inside or
13 with the player user interface 102. This display module 720 can also be used to
14 integrate particular graphics, icons, system objects, menus, and other display
15 preferences of a media provider into the player user interface 102.

16 In this way the media player 702 is configured to be customized based on
17 the instructions 710 and the modules. The instructions 710, the modules, and how
18 they are used will be discussed in greater detail below.

19 The media player 702 includes the player user interface 102 and a media
20 library 722. Users become accustomed to a particular user interface, in this case
21 the player user interface 102, which usually makes them comfortable using it. By
22 integrating the provider user interface 202 into the player user interface 102, the
23 media platform 614 helps make users more comfortable with the provider user
24 interface 202. The player user interface 102 also orients the user by offering
25 numerous types of services to the user, each with particular user experiences.

1 In Fig. 2 for example, the player user interface 102 provides the user with
2 options for services and applicable user experiences for each. The player user
3 interface 102 provides options for the user, including: a now playing option 204; a
4 media guide option 206; a copy from CD option 208; a media library option 210; a
5 radio tuner option 212; a copy to CD or device option 214; a premium services
6 option 216; or a skin chooser option 218. By selecting one of these options, the
7 user can experience different user experiences within the player user interface 102,
8 such as visual representations of the player user interface 102 or the provider user
9 interface 202 and different options applicable to a selected option.

10 As shown in Fig. 2, a user experience from the provider user interface 202
11 is one experience that the user can enjoy by selecting the premium services option
12 216. Here the provider user interface 202 integrated within the player user
13 interface 102 shows premium services available from a media provider with that
14 provider's visual representation attempting to advertise a particular type of media
15 content (here songs by the band entitled "Saliva").

16 Fig. 3 shows an exemplary user experience for another example of the
17 provider user interface 202 within the player user interface 102, here after the user
18 has also selected to download a media file from the media provider.

19 Also by way of example, Fig. 4 shows a user experience from the player
20 user interface 102 if the user selects the media library option 210.

21 In some cases the player user interface 102 acts as a shell around and/or
22 integrated with the provider user interface 202. In Fig. 2, for instance, the player
23 user interface 102 surrounds a visual space provided by a media provider (the
24 provider user interface 202). This internal space within the player user interface
25 102 can be provided by a provider-generated web page making up the provider

1 user interface 202, such as when a user first signs up with a provider or when the
2 user later visits the provider to search, play, or download media files or otherwise
3 interact with the provider. This internal space can also be provided by the media
4 player 702 in combination with a particular media provider.

5 These examples of the provider user interface 202 can be used by user to
6 interact with the applicable media provider. This interaction can include many
7 services, like managing an account, choosing media files to download, play, or
8 record, browse media files, and the like. While not shown, multiple providers can
9 supply the provider user interface 202 for integration with the player user interface
10 102. Each such supplied provider user interface 202 can be tailored specifically to
11 the preferences of the supplying media provider.

12 In other cases, an internal visual space within the player user interface 102
13 is solely provided by the media player 702 or the media platform 614.

14 In either case, the player user interface 102 performs various operation and
15 services, whether alone or in conjunction with the provider user interface 202. As
16 stated herein, the media player 702 uses the player user interface 102 to interact
17 with users, play media files within the player user interface 102, and perform other
18 operations and services.

19 Fig. 1 shows the screen shot 100, which is an example of the player user
20 interface 102 being wholly generated by the media platform 614. In this
21 implementation, an interior space of the player user interface 102 includes a listing
22 of media providers with which a user can sign up. To generate graphical objects
23 associated with each media provider (here icons and special text “Acme”,
24 “SongMax”, and “MovieMaster”) the media platform 614 can call the display
25 module 720 of Fig. 7, through an embedded web control.

1 Exemplary screen shots showing examples of the player user interface 102
2 are shown in Figs. 1-5, 9 and 12 and the provider user interface 202 are shown in
3 Figs. 2, 3, and 12.

4 Fig. 7 shows three media providers, the first media provider 618, the
5 second media provider 620, and the third media provider 622. Three media
6 providers are shown as examples of multiple media providers that are integrated or
7 can be integrated with the media platform 614, but fewer or greater numbers of
8 media providers can also be integrated.

9 The media providers include or allow access by the media platform 614 to
10 media content, such as songs, albums, movies, video clips and the like. The first
11 media provider 618 includes a first media content 724, likewise the second media
12 provider 620 includes a second media content 726, and the third media provider
13 622 includes a third media content 728. While graphically presented in Fig. 7 as
14 being within the media provider, the media content can be within or without the
15 associated media provider. The graphical representation is meant to represent that
16 the media provider has control or a right to control its associated media content.

17

18 Exemplary Methods

19 *Receiving Instructions From Media Providers*

20 Fig. 8 shows a flow diagram 800 for receiving instructions from multiple
21 media providers that are used to customize the media platform 614. This and the
22 following flow diagrams are illustrated as series of blocks representing operations
23 or acts performed by the system 600. These diagrams may be implemented in any
24 suitable hardware, software, firmware, or combination thereof. In the case of
25 software and firmware, they represent sets of operations implemented as

1 computer-executable instructions stored in memory and executable by one or more
2 processors.

3 Prior to block 802, the first media provider 618 was registered as an
4 acceptable media provider from which to receive instructions. The media platform
5 614 either will not receive or if it receives will not implement instructions from
6 media providers that are not listed on the registry 704. This is because the media
7 platform 614 or the user's computer could be damaged by unapproved media
8 providers or those posing as a media provider. In one implementation, however,
9 the media platform 614 can receive and implement instructions from non-listed
10 media providers.

11 At block 802, the media platform 614 receives instructions from the first
12 media provider 618. These instructions can be received as part of a user's signing
13 up with the first media provider 618, such as by a user selecting to sign up with the
14 first media provider 618 through a first media provider signup icon 104 of Fig. 1
15 (entitled "Acme"). Selecting the signup icon 104 begins a sign-up process (not
16 shown) after the completion of which the user is signed up with the first media
17 player 618. This process can include a sign-up managed by the media platform
18 614 within the player user interface 102 or can include rendering web page(s)
19 from the first media provider 618 within the player user interface 102 (such as
20 with the provider user interface 202).

21 The instructions can be received after being requested by the media
22 platform 614 or sent by the first media provider 618 based on a user signing up
23 with the first media provider 618. Alternatively, the instructions can be received
24 once the first media provider 618 is added to the registry 704 whether or not a user
25 signs up with the first media provider 618.

1 At block 804, the media platform 614 customizes itself to conform to the
2 instructions. These customizations can take many different forms, from deep
3 functional integration to light or deep user interface integration.

4 In one implementation, the media platform 614 is configured such that the
5 media platform 614 can customize itself to instructions that are independently
6 created. These instructions can be built wholly without active interaction from the
7 media platform 614, programmers associated with the media platform 614, or the
8 like. Thus, the media platform 614 of this implementation is configured such that
9 it can customize itself to any media provider, known or unknown, that provides
10 instructions that follow certain parameters. In this implementation an independent
11 media provider can create instructions for the media platform 614 to follow
12 without help or interaction from the media platform 614. In this way, the media
13 platform 614 is universally usable and customizable by media providers.

14 In another implementation, the customizations include storing code
15 modules for later use based on or contained in the instructions from the first media
16 provider 618. These code modules can include the play module 712, the record
17 module 714, the background module 716, the download module 718, and the
18 display module 720, shown in Fig. 7.

19 Some of the modules can be later used by the media platform 614 to assess
20 whether or not a particular operation can be performed by the media player 702
21 (like playing or copying to CD a media file from the first media provider 618).

22 The background module 716 can be used by the media platform 614 to
23 perform tasks in which the first media provider 618 is interested. These tasks can
24 include keeping track of how many times a media file from the first media
25 provider 618 is played, for instance.

1 The display module 720 can be used to indicate or provide additional user
2 interfaces and functionality when certain conditions occur, such as a pop-up
3 window from or following parameters from the first media provider 618 when a
4 user attempts to burn a media file to CD but does not yet have a right to do so.

5 In one implementation, the customizations include altering aspects of the
6 player user interface 102. Such aspects can include graphical icons that
7 accompany media files from the first media provider 618. Other aspects can be an
8 audio chime or jingle played when the first media provider 618 or one of its media
9 files is selected by the user, and the like. Still other aspects include rendering web
10 pages from the first media provider 618 within the player user interface 102.

11 These and other user interface customizations are used by the media
12 platform 614 to alter a user's experience to tailor it to the first media provider's
13 618 specifications. By tailoring the user's experience, the media platform 614 acts
14 to instill greater brand recognition and loyalty with the first media provider 618.
15 This also allows the first media provider 618 to have an impact on how a user
16 perceives and interacts with the first media provider 618. The first media provider
17 618 can do so with very little programming or effort. Much of the work behind
18 the user interfaces and experience of users is provided by the media platform 614,
19 rather than needing to be created at the expense and effort of the first media
20 provider 618.

21 In another implementation, the customizations include adding or altering
22 options and controls available to a user. The media platform 614 can alter options
23 and controls so that a user can request new or improved functions. In one
24 implementation, the media platform 614 adds a selection button for the first media
25 provider 618 after a user has signed up with the first media provider 618.

1 Fig. 9 sets forth an exemplary screen shot 900 showing an example of a
2 first media provider selection button 902. This button 902 has the name or an icon
3 associated with the first media provider 618. It is an added customization to the
4 media platform 614 that allows a user to skip various steps to jump (such as with a
5 URL) directly to a web page of the first media provider 618. This web page can
6 be tailored to the user or generally be tailored to users that have subscribed to the
7 first media provider 618. This is another example of how the media platform 614
8 uses the instructions 710 from the first media provider 618 to customize itself for
9 the benefit of the first media provider 618.

10 At block 806, the media platform 614 receives instructions from the second
11 media provider 620. The media platform 614 does so in a manner similar to those
12 set forth for receiving instructions from the first media provider 618. The media
13 platform 614 can continue to receive instructions from multiple other media
14 providers, such as the third media provider 622. In each case, the instructions can
15 be treated separately for each media provider so that the media platform 614 is
16 customized without the media providers conflicting. Thus, while a particular page
17 of the player user interface 102 can include icons for multiple media providers,
18 certain pages of the player user interface 102 can be solely for a particular media
19 provider. If a user selects to browse media files from one media provider or be
20 connected to one media provider, the pages corresponding to these selections will
21 be tailored to the particular media provider.

22 Similarly, the functional aspects from the instructions 710, such as the
23 modules of Fig. 7, are associated with the appropriate media provider. Thus, if a
24 user later wishes to burn a media file from the first media provider 618, the media
25

1 platform 614 will use the module associated with the first media provider 618 to
2 assess if the media file can be burned.

3 At block 808, the media platform 614 tailors itself to conform to the
4 instructions 710 from the second media provider 620. The media platform 614
5 does so similarly to as set forth above for instructions received from the first
6 media provider 618, though each set of instructions from different media providers
7 can be kept separated and associated with the media provider from which they are
8 received.

9

10 *Enabling User Interaction With Media Providers*

11 Fig. 10 shows a flow diagram 1000 for enabling a user to access and
12 interact with a remote media provider.

13 The flow diagram 1000 shows actions performed by the media platform
14 614 that allow a user to access and view media operations from the remote media
15 provider. These actions performed can also enable performance of an operation
16 selected by the user while connected across the communication network 616 to a
17 remote media provider.

18 The media platform 614 can perform many different media operations, like
19 play, download (save onto temporary or permanent medium), and make portable
20 (save onto a portable permanent medium) a media file. These operations can be
21 performed when a user is connected to a remote media provider (like the first
22 media provider 618 of Fig. 7), or when not connected (such as when the user is not
23 connected to the communication network 616). The flow diagram 1000 covers
24 operations requested from a media provider by a user when the media platform
25

1 614 is connected with the media provider. Operations requested when not
2 connected will be covered in a flow diagram 1300 below.

3 At block 1002, the media platform 614 receives input to gain access to a
4 particular media provider. A user may wish to gain access to a media provider in
5 order to manage their account with the media provider, search through media files
6 available from the media provider, play, download, or save a media file, gain
7 metadata about media files (like information about the artist), see recommended
8 artists' media files, and the like.

9 The media platform 614 receives input from a user through a user interface.
10 This user interface can include the player user interface 102, shown in Fig. 9. Fig.
11 9 shows an exemplary fashion by which the media platform 614 can receive input
12 from the user: the first media provider selection button 902. By selecting this
13 button 902, the user is selecting to be connected to the first media provider 618.
14 Consequently, the media platform 614 receives the input to gain access through
15 the button 902.

16 At block 1004, the media platform 614 enables the media provider to
17 present selection options for various operations. As shown in Fig. 3, these options
18 can include playing, downloading, and making portable a particular media file.
19 Fig. 3 includes these options in a pop-up window 302. The window 302 includes
20 selection options of play 304, download 306, and make portable 308.

21 The media platform 614 enables the media provider to present these options
22 by integrating the media provider's user interface 202 into the player user interface
23 102. Thus, the provider user interface 202 is contained within and integrated with
24 the player user interface 102.

25

1 Fig. 3 shows the provider user interface 202 within the player user interface
2 102. In this example the provider user interface 202 is a webpage of the first
3 media provider 618 fitted within the player user interface 102. As can be seen
4 from Fig. 3, the provider user interface 202 is conformed by the media platform
5 614 to fit seamlessly within the player user interface 102. This makes integration
6 of user interfaces allows a clear and easy way for a user to use the player user
7 interface 102 to which he or she is accustomed, while also interacting with the
8 provider's user interface 202. The user may not even know that any part of the
9 provider's user interface 202 is a webpage, that it is received across the
10 communication network 616, or that it otherwise is not a seamless part of the
11 player user interface 102.

12 To clarify what part of the screen shot 300 shown in Fig. 3 is an example of
13 the provider user interface 202, the provider user interface 202 is outlined with a
14 dashed line. A provider's user interface can in integrated in various other ways
15 with the player user interface 102 other than set forth in Fig. 3.

16 In one implementation (not shown), the player user interface 102 is altered
17 by the media platform 614 to perform all of the graphical user interface aspects,
18 based on the instructions 710 received from the applicable media provider, such
19 that the integration of the media provider does not require graphical input, but
20 rather functional specifications. The instructions 710 can include the display
21 module 720. In this implementation the provider user interface 202 is not a
22 webpage of the media provider.

23 At block 1006, the media platform 614 enables selection of the presented
24 operations. Continuing the ongoing example set forth in Fig. 3, the media
25

1 platform 1006 enables a user to select the selection options of play 304, download
2 306, and make portable 308 from the window 302.

3 At block 1008, the media platform 614 receives a selection of one of the
4 operations. Thus, in this continuing example a user selected one of the options,
5 such as through graphically selecting it with the input device 606 (e.g., clicking on
6 it with a mouse).

7 At block 1010, the media platform 614 performs the selected operation.
8 Thus, if the user selected the play option 304 of Fig. 3, the media platform 614
9 would play the appropriate media file (here the song “Elevation” by “U2”).

10 If the operation includes downloading a media file, the media platform 614
11 downloads the media file into the memory 612 or another memory device. As part
12 of downloading the media file, the media platform 614 can perform other useful
13 actions that further integrate media providers into the media platform 614. This
14 further integration makes using the media platform 614 for multiple media
15 providers easier for users.

16 The media platform 614 can receive metadata about a downloaded media
17 file 614 from the media provider or other sources. This metadata can include
18 information about the media file, such as the artist, the album name, the producer,
19 the company or individual holding rights to the media file, the time of play, what
20 track it is on an album (if applicable), and the like. This metadata can then be
21 provided to the user for later use and as a search tool by which a user can search
22 through media files that have been downloaded.

23 The media platform 614 can also save the media file into logical, particular
24 locations in the memory 612. The media platform 614 can do so without having to
25

1 ask the user where he or she would like it saved, but rather can save it in a default
2 location.

3 Further, the media platform 614 can create folders to hold the media files
4 based on the metadata for the media file. Likewise, the media platform 614 can
5 save the media files under new names based on the metadata. Thus, for the song
6 “Elevation” by “U2” which is part of the album “All That You Can’t L...”, the
7 media platform 614 can create a folder entitled “U2”, a subfolder within that
8 folder entitled “All That You Can’t L...”, and save the media file under the name
9 “Elevation” within the subfolder.

10 Also, the media platform 614 can add a link to the media file to the media
11 library 722. This way, the user can later search through his or her library (whether
12 offline or online) and select the media file through the library 722. This library
13 722 and the media platform’s 614 automatic integration of media files downloaded
14 from various media providers makes it easier for a user to find, play, and discover
15 information about his or her media files.

16 Other operations, like recording a media file onto a portable device, are also
17 performed by the media platform 614. For recording a media file onto a portable
18 device, the media platform 614 downloads the media file onto the portable
19 device’s portable memory. The media platform 614 can do so similarly to the
20 download operation above (including saving it under a different name and in
21 newly-created folders).

22 In those cases where a media provider (here the first media provider 618)
23 retains control of the operations presented to a user, such as when the first media
24 provider 618 is in communication with the user through the communication
25 network 616, the media platform 614 performs the selected operation without

1 determining whether or not the operation is authorized by the first media provider
2 618. It can do so in these cases because authorization is implied by the first media
3 provider 618 when the first media provider 618 retains control through
4 communication with the media platform 614 at the instant the user requests the
5 operation.

6 In those cases where a media provider (again the first media provider 618
7 for our ongoing example) does not retain control of the operations presented to the
8 user, however, the media platform 614 first assesses whether or not performance
9 of the operation is allowed by the first media provider 614. How this assessment
10 is performed shall be discussed in greater detail below.

11

12 *Downloading Media From a Media Provider*

13 Fig. 11 shows a flow diagram 1100 for downloading a media file from a
14 media provider. This flow diagram 1100 sets forth actions performed to download
15 a file for later use by the user.

16 At block 1102, the media platform 614 receives a request to download a
17 media file. This request can come from a user directly, or through the media
18 provider. When the request comes from the media provider, it can be due to a
19 request made by the user, or can be due to other causes, like the media provider
20 wishing to provide free or promotional downloads.

21 At block 1104, the media platform 614 receives the media file. The media
22 file can be received from the media provider directly, or from another source, in
23 which case the media provider provides the media platform 614 with authorization
24 to download the media file.

1 Fig. 12 sets forth a screen shot 1200 showing an example of the provider
2 user interface 202 within the player user interface 102 showing a media file being
3 downloaded. The downloading media file is by the artist “U2” and is a track
4 entitled “New Y...”. In this example the provider user interface 202 is showing
5 the status of the downloading process, but the media player 702 is performing the
6 download. The media player 702 is downloading the media file from a web server
7 controlled by the first media provider 618.

8 In one implementation, if the receiving of the media file is interrupted (such
9 as by communication with the communication network 616 failing), the media
10 platform 614 saves that part of the media file downloaded. With this part saved,
11 once communication with the communication network 616 resumes, the media
12 platform 614 can automatically resume downloading the media file. The media
13 platform 614 can resume downloading the media file automatically or can inquire
14 from the user whether or not the user wishes to resume the download now, later, or
15 give up.

16 At block 1106, the media platform 614 locates metadata for the
17 downloaded or to-be downloaded media file. This metadata includes various
18 information about the media file or the media provider associated with the media
19 file. This information can include the media file's current name, artist, track,
20 album, run time, advisory statement (such as a parental advisory for explicit lyrics
21 or a restricted movie rating), interesting facts about the media file or artist,
22 copyright information, producer, director, country of origin, and other information
23 desired about the media file.

24 At block 1108, the media platform 614 stores the media file based on some
25 of the metadata located. This storing can be performed by the media platform 614

1 immediately after the media file is received, and without user interaction. By so
2 doing the user can download media files with little effort. As set forth above, the
3 media file can be stored in a folder with a name of the artist or album, which the
4 media platform 614 can create if it does not exist. The media platform 614 can
5 also change the name for the media file to be more intuitive to the user, such as by
6 changing its name to be the media file's common title. If, for instance, a media
7 file has a name "JefAp_2_06_128k_Lather_.wma", the media platform 614 can
8 save under a new name, like "Elevation" (the title of a song selected in Fig. 3).

9 As part of this step, the media platform 614 also can store all or some of the
10 metadata into a separate location for later use, such as in the media library 722.

11 At block 1110, the media platform 614 adds a link to the downloaded
12 media file to the media library 722. The media platform 614 can add this link to
13 the media library 722 without interaction from the user. By adding this link
14 automatically, the user can, without any effort, find the media file easily by
15 searching through the media library 722. This media library 722 can include all
16 the media files accessible by the media player 702, such as media files illegally
17 downloaded, media files legitimately downloaded, including from the first media
18 provider 618, the second media provider 620, and the third media provider 622,
19 for instance. By including links (and potentially, extensive metadata) about many
20 media files, even if they come from many different sources, a user can search
21 through and use his or her media files with little effort.

22 By automatically integrating new media files into the media library 722, the
23 media platform 614 makes using the media player 702 easier and simpler for
24 users, even if the media files come from multiple media providers.

25

1 *Using a Media File From a Media Provider*

2 Fig. 13 shows a flow diagram 1300 for using a media file associated with a
3 media provider. This flow diagram 1300 covers instances in which a user requests
4 an operation for a media file that is already accessible by the media platform 614.
5 The media file can be accessible by having been downloaded onto the computer
6 608 (shown in Fig. 6), a connected memory device (not shown in Fig. 6), or
7 otherwise, so long as it is accessible by the media platform 614 (or parts thereof,
8 like its media player 702). Before performing a requested operation, the media
9 platform 614 determines whether or not the applicable media provider authorizes
10 the requested operation on its media file. By so doing, the media platform 614
11 integrates functionality for a media provider. This integration enables the media
12 provider to control how its media files are used.

13 At block 1302 the media platform 614 receives a request to perform a
14 media operation for a media file. The request can be received by the user selecting
15 from options in a drop-down list, through key-entered commands, indirectly or in
16 other manners, or through graphically selecting an operation presented by the
17 player user interface 102.

18 Fig. 9 sets forth the screen shot 900 showing an example of the player user
19 interface 102. In this example, the player user interface 102 is ready to perform an
20 operation for the media file “Song.wma”. As shown in this example of the player
21 user interface 102, a user can graphically select to play the media file by selecting
22 a play button 904 or the copy to a CD or device option 214. The copy option 214
23 is described in greater detail herein, but includes copying the media file to a
24 permanent medium (like a CD, DVD, or other memory device), or
25 copying/downloading to a portable device.

1 At block 1304, the media platform 614 determines to which media provider
2 the selected media file is attributable. In some cases a media file will not be
3 attributable to a media provider, such as when the media file was privately created,
4 is in the public domain, or was gained illicitly. In these cases the media player
5 702 can play and otherwise perform operations on the media file without the
6 actions in blocks 1304, 1306, or 1308 needing to be performed.

7 The media platform 614 can determine to which media provider the media
8 file is attributable (if any) with aid of a unique identifier for the media provider.
9 This unique identifier can be found within the media file, including in a header
10 added to the media file when the media platform 614 first downloaded the media
11 file. These ways of determining can be performed whether the media platform
12 614 is in communication with the communication network 616 or otherwise.

13 The media platform 614 can also determine to which media provider the
14 media file is attributable by searching through a database that correlates media
15 files to media providers. This database can be within the memory 612 of
16 computer 608 or accessible via the communications network 616.

17 Once the media platform 614 determines to which media provider the
18 media file is attributable, the media platform 614 assesses whether or not the
19 media provider allows the requested operation for that media file (block 1306).
20 This ability of the media platform 614 to make this assessment allows deep
21 integration of functions desired by many media providers.

22 The media platform 614 can assess whether or the requested operation is
23 allowed based on the instructions 710 received from the media provider. These
24 instructions 710 can be in the form of or allow creation of computer code modules
25 (like those set forth in Fig. 7). Each module can be executed for a particular

1 requested operation to determine if the operation is allowed. To execute a code
2 module the media platform 614 can call it with an API associated with that
3 particular code module.

4 For example, if the operation requested is to copy a media file onto a CD,
5 the media platform 614 can execute the record module 714 of Fig. 7. The record
6 module 714, when executed, determines whether or not the user has a right to
7 record (copy) the media file, which it communicates to the media platform 614.

8 When a code module is stored in the memory 612 of the computer 608, the
9 media platform 614 assesses whether or not the operation is allowed by the media
10 provider without having to communicate with the media provider (such as the first
11 media provider 618 of Fig. 6). This offline/off-communication assessment allows
12 the first media provider 618 to control how its media files are used by a user
13 without the first media provider 618 needing to be in communication with the
14 media platform 614.

15 At block 1308, if the operation is allowed, the media platform 614 will
16 perform it. If not, it will not.

17 In one implementation, however, if the media platform 614 assesses that
18 the request record operation is not allowed (by executing the record module 714),
19 the record module 714 and the media platform 614 can work together to facilitate
20 recording the media file. In this implementation, the record module 714 generates
21 a dialog box or other interface to communicate with the user. Here the user is told
22 that the operation is not allowed, but that if the user wishes to purchase a right to
23 record the media file that it will be allowed. This dialog box (not shown) presents
24 options to the user, such as to purchase the right to record the media file from
25 existing credits, to purchase the right but pay for it later, and not to purchase or

1 record the media file at this time. This purchasing of the right can be completed
2 with the media platform 614 and the record module 714 without contemporaneous
3 communication with the applicable media provider or otherwise.

4 If the right is purchased without contemporaneous communication with the
5 applicable media provider the media platform 614 can create a record that the user
6 agreed to purchase the right so that at some future time the media platform 614
7 will communicate that the right was purchased and what operation was performed.
8 This record can be retained in the service record 706 of Fig. 7.

9 If the right is purchased while in communication with the applicable media
10 provider, the media provider is in direct communication with the user, such as
11 through the provider user interface 202 within the player user interface 102. Here
12 the user and the media provider can interact according to how the media provider
13 wishes to build its provider user interface 202. In this case the media platform 614
14 may or may not record the operation in the service record 706.

15

16 *Using a Media File From a Media Provider*

17 Fig. 14 shows a flow diagram 1400 covering allowance and expiration of a
18 right to use a media file associated with a media provider. This flow diagram
19 1400 covers instances in which a user's right to a currently stored media file can
20 cease based on an occurrence of a particular event. This is another example of
21 how functionality desired by a media provider can be followed by and integrated
22 into the media platform 614.

23 At block 1402 the media platform 614 receives permission for a particular
24 operation to be performed for one or more media files. This permission can be
25 received when the user first signs up with the media provider, such as in the

1 instructions 710 received from the media provider at that time. This permission
2 can also be received when the user communicates with the media provider through
3 the media platform 614, such as when the user interacts with the media provider
4 through the provider user interface 202. Also, this permission can be part of the
5 media file, such that when the media file is downloaded it contains an indication
6 that certain operations are allowed based on certain conditions.

7 For example, if a user signs up with the second media provider 620, the
8 instructions 710 from the second media provider 620 can indicate that the user has
9 a right to download as many songs as he or she likes, but that he or she can only
10 play those songs for so long as the user maintains a monthly license with the
11 second media provider 620. In this example, the operation permitted is playing
12 one or media files, but that permission can expire based on an event (a certain
13 amount of time elapsing without the permission being extended). For this
14 example assume that the right to play the media files expires 30 days after the user
15 signed up with the second media provider 620.

16 At block 1404 the media platform 614 enables the permitted operation of
17 the media file. In the ongoing example, the media platform 614 will play any
18 media file from the second media provider 620 (so long as the permission
19 remains).

20 At block 1406, as an ongoing matter, or after request by the user to perform
21 an operation, the media platform 614 determines if the permission remains. In one
22 implementation, the media platform 614 determines if the event has occurred that
23 triggers the permission to be deactivated. In the ongoing example, if it has been
24 30 days since the user signed up with the second media provider 620, the user will
25

1 no longer have permission to play the media files attributable to the second media
2 provider 620.

3 In another implementation, the media platform 614 checks against a record
4 to determine if the permission remains. This record can be the service record 706
5 of Fig. 7. The service record 706 can be used to retain a number of times a media
6 file is played, downloaded to a portable device, and recorded. It can also retain a
7 number of times the user plays, downloads, and records media files attributable to
8 a particular media provider. In this implementation, the media provider associated
9 with a particular media file can base continued permission to perform an operation
10 on a number of times a particular event occurs. If, for instance, a user wishes to
11 play a media file a 36th time, and the applicable media provider only allows the
12 media file to be played 35 times, when the media platform 614 checks the service
13 record 706 and finds that the media file has already been played 35 times, the
14 permission will expire.

15 Similarly, if the user is attempting to record a particular media file, the
16 media platform 614 can determine if the user has a right to record the media file
17 based on whether or not the service record 706 shows that the user has recorded
18 that media file a maximum number of times or has recorded other media files an
19 aggregate maximum number of times.

20 At block 1408 if the permission remains the media platform 614 proceeds
21 along the “Yes” path to block 1410. If not, it proceeds along the “No” path to
22 block 1412.

23 At block 1410, the media platform 614 allows the use. Continuing the
24 ongoing example, the media platform 614 will play media files from the second
25

1 media provider 620 for the first 29 days after the user signed up with the second
2 media provider 620.

3 At the block 1412, the media platform 614 communicates with the media
4 provider to which the permission was earlier granted but not longer remains. Here
5 the media platform 614 determines whether the media provider has renewed the
6 permission. In the ongoing example, at day 35 after the user signed up with the
7 second media provider 620, the right to play media files ceased. By
8 communicating with the second media provider 620, the media platform 614
9 determines if the permission is renewed (such as by the user paying a second
10 month's subscription fee) or not.

11 At block 1414, if the permission is renewed, the media platform 614
12 proceeds along the "Yes" path to block 1410 and allows the use. If not, it
13 proceeds along the "No" path to block 1416.

14 At block 1416 the media platform 614 disables the no-longer-permitted use.
15 Thus, in the ongoing example, the user will not longer be permitted to play media
16 files from the second media provider 620.

17

18 A Computer System

19 Fig. 15 shows an exemplary computer system that can be used to
20 implement the processes described herein. Computer 1542 includes one or more
21 processors or processing units 1544, a system memory 1546, and a bus 1548 that
22 couples various system components including the system memory 1546 to
23 processors 1544. The bus 1548 represents one or more of any of several types of
24 bus structures, including a memory bus or memory controller, a peripheral bus, an
25 accelerated graphics port, and a processor or local bus using any of a variety of

1 bus systems. The system memory 1546 includes read only memory (ROM) 1550
2 and random access memory (RAM) 1552. A basic input/output system (BIOS)
3 1554, containing the basic routines that help to transfer information between
4 elements within computer 1542, such as during start-up, is stored in ROM 1550.

5 Computer 1542 further includes a hard disk drive 1556 for reading from
6 and writing to a hard disk (not shown), a magnetic disk drive 1558 for reading
7 from and writing to a removable magnetic disk 1560, and an optical disk drive
8 1562 for reading from or writing to a removable optical disk 1564 such as a CD
9 ROM or other optical media. The hard disk drive 1556, magnetic disk drive 1558,
10 and optical disk drive 1562 are connected to the bus 1548 by an SCSI interface
11 1566 or some other appropriate interface. The drives and their associated
12 computer-readable media provide nonvolatile storage of computer-readable
13 instructions, data structures, program modules and other data for computer 1542.
14 Although the exemplary environment described herein employs a hard disk, a
15 removable magnetic disk 1560 and a removable optical disk 1564, it should be
16 appreciated by those skilled in the art that other types of computer-readable media
17 which can store data that is accessible by a computer, such as magnetic cassettes,
18 flash memory cards, digital video disks, random access memories (RAMs), read
19 only memories (ROMs), and the like, may also be used in the exemplary operating
20 environment.

21 A number of program modules may be stored on the hard disk 1556,
22 magnetic disk 1560, optical disk 1564, ROM 1550, or RAM 1552, including an
23 operating system 1570, one or more application programs 1572 (such as the media
24 platform 614), other program modules 1574, and program data 1576. A user may
25 enter commands and information into computer 1542 through input devices such

1 as a keyboard 1578 and a pointing device 1580. Other input devices (not shown)
2 may include a microphone, joystick, game pad, satellite dish, scanner, or the like.
3 These and other input devices are connected to the processing unit 1544 through
4 an interface 1582 that is coupled to the bus 1548. A monitor 1584 or other type of
5 display device is also connected to the bus 1548 via an interface, such as a video
6 adapter 1586. In addition to the monitor, personal computers typically include
7 other peripheral output devices (not shown) such as speakers and printers.

8 Computer 1542 commonly operates in a networked environment using
9 logical connections to one or more remote computers, such as a remote computer
10 1588. The remote computer 1588 may be another personal computer, a server, a
11 router, a network PC, a peer device or other common network node, and typically
12 includes many or all of the elements described above relative to computer 1542.
13 The logical connections depicted in Fig. 15 include a local area network (LAN)
14 1590 and a wide area network (WAN) 1592. Such networking environments are
15 commonplace in offices, enterprise-wide computer networks, intranets, and the
16 Internet.

17 When used in a LAN networking environment, computer 1542 is connected
18 to the local network through a network interface or adapter 1594. When used in a
19 WAN networking environment, computer 1542 typically includes a modem 1596
20 or other means for establishing communications over the wide area network 1592,
21 such as the Internet. The modem 1596, which may be internal or external, is
22 connected to the bus 1548 via a serial port interface 1568. In a networked
23 environment, program modules depicted relative to the personal computer 1542, or
24 portions thereof, may be stored in the remote memory storage device. It will be
25

1 appreciated that the network connections shown are exemplary and other means of
2 establishing a communications link between the computers may be used.

3 Generally, the data processors of computer 1542 are programmed by means
4 of instructions stored at different times in the various computer-readable storage
5 media of the computer. Programs and operating systems are typically distributed,
6 for example, on floppy disks or CD-ROMs. From there, they are installed or
7 loaded into the secondary memory of a computer. At execution, they are loaded at
8 least partially into the computer's primary electronic memory. The invention
9 described herein includes these and other various types of computer-readable
10 storage media when such media contain instructions or programs for implementing
11 the blocks described below in conjunction with a microprocessor or other data
12 processor. The invention also includes the computer itself when programmed
13 according to the methods and techniques described herein.

14 For purposes of illustration, programs and other executable program
15 components such as the operating system are illustrated herein as discrete blocks,
16 although it is recognized that such programs and components reside at various
17 times in different storage components of the computer, and are executed by the
18 data processor(s) of the computer.

19

20 **Conclusion**

21 The above-described system includes a media platform that, with its related
22 methods, enable each of multiple media providers to tailor a media player to allow
23 access, enable use, and control use of its media. Because a media provider can
24 tailor this media player to how it wants the media player to behave, the media
25 providers is less likely to need to create a media player of its own. Similarly, users

1 can rely on the media platform rather than multiple media players, saving the users
2 the time and effort they might have to spend learning to use many different media
3 players. Although the invention has been described in language specific to
4 structural features and/or methodological acts, it is to be understood that the
5 invention defined in the appended claims is not necessarily limited to the specific
6 features or acts described. Rather, the specific features and acts are disclosed as
7 exemplary forms of implementing the claimed invention.

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